



Organized in 1990

VIRGINIA CHAPTER *of the* AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

Inland Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Virginia

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Fall Edition:

December 2018

As I sit to write this message, I am reflecting on all the great things our Chapter has accomplished in 2018 and look forward to things to come in our future. The year started with a wonderful annual meeting in Fredericksburg, VA which was highlighted by a statistical power workshop led by VDGF's own Dan Goetz and Aaron Bunch along with Dr. Don Orth from Virginia Tech. Two keynote speakers, Steven Nash from University of Richmond and Dr. Michael Pace from UVA, spoke to our group about climate change and measuring variance to detect changing ecosystems. With the crazy weather experienced this year, the information presented in these keynote talks seems increasingly relevant and important to our field going forward. I would like to congratulate all our scholarship and award winners that were acknowledged at the meeting:

Robert D. Ross Graduate Scholarship: Winner Katie McBaine-Virginia Tech, Runner-up Jon Studio-JMU

Robert E. Jenkin Undergraduate Scholarship: Winner Cole Reeves-VT, Runner-up Chanz Hopkins-VT

Best Undergraduate Paper: Winner Emily Ploppert, Runner-up Hania Abboud

Best Graduate Paper: Winner (tied) Katie McBaine and Jon Studio

Best Student Poster: Corbin Hilling-VT

Eugene W. Surber Professional Fisheries Scientist Award: George Palmer-VDGIF

Natural Resource Conservationist Award: Robbie Savage-Rivanna Conservation Alliance

A big thank you goes out to Mike Isel, John Odenkirk, and Robbie Willis for arranging the Hyatt Place venue and seeing to all the details during the meeting.

The February meeting was just the start of great things to come. In July, the Chapter helped host the First International Snakehead Symposium in Alexandria, VA. I was unable to attend the meeting, but heard from multiple attendees that it was a great meeting that facilitated talks and discussions among professionals across the world dealing with introductions and management of different snakehead species. We thank John Odenkirk for his hard work in planning, coordinating, and running the meeting. Talks from the meeting are up on YouTube and there are plans to publish papers from the symposium sometime early 2019.



The Virginia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is a subunit of the [American Fisheries Society](http://www.americanfisheries.org). The chapter was established in 1990 to provide fisheries professionals in Virginia with increased access to AFS; encourage the exchange of information among fisheries and other aquatic resource professionals; provide a forum for the discussion, debate, and resolution of aquatic resource issues within Virginia; and serve the Commonwealth by providing expert scientific knowledge to allow for informed decisions concerning the use and development of the state's natural resources. The Chapter website can be found at <http://sdafs.org/vcafs/>

In the summer of 2018, the Chapter sponsored its first Virginia Junior Fisheries Biologist. Jacob Lam from Grottoes, VA was our first recipient and he worked with VDGIF staff in Verona. From June through August, Jacob worked on a variety of projects including a project constructing, deploying, and monitoring catfish spawning boxes at one public impoundment. Jacob is planning to present his work at the 2019 Virginia Chapter meeting. Recently, the Chapter EXCOM has reviewed bank accounts and determined that there are funds available to sponsor the scholarship for 2019.

Work on the Virginia Freshwater Fishes Field Guide has continued through 2018 and the committee working on the project is finally starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. The Chapter has procured illustrations for the guide, finished the written portion, and is working on the book layout. We expect the guide to go to the John Hopkins Press in late 2018 or early 2019 with an anticipated release date sometime in late 2019 or early 2020. Funding for the project is also on fire, with ten different benefactors already donating nearly \$14,000 to the project. The Chapter has a fundraising goal \$20,000 for the project.

Moving forward the Chapter has some exciting things on the horizon. We are in the planning process for the 2019 annual meeting that will be held in Blacksburg, VA from February 19th through the 21st. The meeting will be a joint meeting with the West Virginia and Virginia Tech Chapters and will offer a plenary session on the R3 (recruitment, retention, and reactivation) initiative. We have all heard about R3 recently and we feel it is time for us to learn a little more about the initiative and how it is going to affect us and our profession in the future. The session will feature talks from John Arway (former Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Executive Director) and DGIF and West Virginia R3 coordinators. We expect to have a wonderful meeting and hope to miss the arctic blast/snowstorm that we have experienced at some of our recent meetings.

Finally, the Chapter has agreed to host the 2021 Southern Division meeting from Feb 17th through 21st, 2021 in Arlington, Virginia. The EXCOM has started gathering information for planning the meeting and realized that hosting a meeting of this size is a tremendous undertaking. We hope to start selecting individuals to fill roles as meeting committee chairs in the near future and ask our members to please volunteer to lead or work on one of the numerous meeting committees. We want to make the 2021 meeting a huge success and one of the best in recent memory. With that, I want to thank all you fishheads for your hard work and look forward to seeing everyone in Blacksburg.

Sincerely,

Johnathan Harris



Plugging with greatness: The last Jedi-Pluggger



In 2017 our very own George Palmer, was awarded the Southeastern Aquatic Biologist of the year. Mostly for his time and service in preserving and enhancing the native southern strain walleye in the New River Drainage. He has also served as chair of the walleye committee for 8 years. A thankless task according to him that usually incites a lot of shouting matches at meetings, back door fish trading deals, and incognito fish grabs across regional lines (I made these up myself). Nevertheless, I wondered what has tickled his fancy in achieving such greatness for almost 20 years. I sat down in his office one day and asked him. "George what do you attribute your success and determination to?" He paused for a minute and stared forward at the wall decorated with fishing lures. All of the sudden his eyes started to twinkle. I had seen that twinkle before. One particular day electrofishing on the James River, while in a dipping trance during a run, I first heard the infamous shout "PLUG!!!". Before I had time to think what I just heard, I felt a swift jerk of the boat, and after catching a metal rail to the kidney and almost being ejected, I glared at George in confusion. He was fixated on something at the shoreline. What was it? I thought. A turkey? Coyote? Big Foot? No, something rarer. His eyes widened, and that same twinkle appeared in his eye. He pointed nobly at the trees and said "there it is boys." I turned and saw what appeared to be a Double Cowgirl, the "Holy Grail" of plugging, a.k.a. Drunken Cheerleader, (Steve Reeser 2017) dangling from a tree branch about 10 feet off the waterline. Our technician, Tyler Young, shouted, "It's gonna be a good day today boys".

Why is it going to be a good day? I asked Tyler- "Man that's at least a \$35.00 plug" he said. This was a highly unusual find because according to George, "only the laziest of lazy anglers leave such an expensive plug in the trees". George replied, "You can tell how good the anglers are at controlling their casts by what they leave in the trees." He went on, "generally if you find a lot of 'Walmart' type plugs, they're usually your novice/lazy anglers. Generally, a fish or something out of the anglers' control breaks off the expensive plugs you find. So to find a cowgirl in the trees is extremely rare."

Tyler said, "I don't even know why he likes plugging so much, he doesn't even fish, so I high-grade all the expensive plugs and keep them for myself. You know what else chaps my hide? He always makes me drive the truck, but I rarely get to drive the boat." "Well how am I supposed to see the plugs if I'm dipping fish?" asked George.

I later asked George's supervisor, Scott Smith, about his plugging addiction. "The irony of it all is George really can't see well, heck he needs reading glasses and holds the paper three feet from his face just to read over his reports, but he can spot a Panther Martin in a sycamore tree from 200 yards away...easy, maybe more, that's not a joke either. I saw him do it. One time I was on Smith Mountain Lake with Dan Wilson. We were planting water willow at a site on the beach, and found 'A' bobber. The following week he goes out, and finds eight plugs. Surely, the playing field was in our favor, we are all old and can't see but there were two of us against one."

I asked George, What do you attribute your plugging skills too?

He replied, "In 1997 I started my walleye telemetry project at Claytor Lake. Tom Hampton and Cliff Kirk would come down and help me on occasion. When they would come out, they would spot all the plugs in the trees and it was hard for me to find them. I noticed when we would pull into a cove I would find 'zero' and they would find 8-10. This was survival of the fittest in the natural world. I was thrown in with a bunch of warriors, so I needed to acquire more skills to survive because I was far from a Master. It was like playing golf with Tiger Woods. They were hardcore, had saws, poles, nets etc..." I followed this up by asking Tom

Hampton about his early beginnings. He had this to say. "With fond memories I recall the day when Cliff Kirk, George and I were tracking walleyes on the upper end of Claytor Lake. This was in the late 1990's. George was still in graduate school and Cliff and I had joined him for the day to see what his walleye research was all about. We tied off to the shoreline to eat lunch and as usual scarfed down everything we had in five minutes or less. As fate would have it, George parked the boat near a cove where a lot of floating debris had collected. I suggested that we get out and stretch our legs for a few minutes and see if we could find any plugs. George was skeptical but agreed to give it a go. I don't recall who found the first plug, but I do recall that when George found one he yelled out 'PLUG!' This became the official response from that moment forward. It was both a declaration of ownership and an announcement of success. When someone found a plug we were all encouraged to look harder because it must be a good location. George excelled at finding plugs in likely and unlikely places. He found them in coves, in open water, hanging in trees and sometimes underwater. Once he even put together a series of photos of plugs in their natural environment as sort of a training program. It was like Find Waldo for fishing lures. All jokes aside though, finding plugs really did give us insight into what people were fishing with on a given waterbody. Each lake or river had its most popular offerings, based on the species composition, local preferences and the latest trends. Some of the best lures I ever fished with were lures that we found. One year I received a telescoping lure retriever as a Christmas present. That really extended our effective range and all but eliminated the temptation to climb trees or cut them down. Most of the lures we found were still in production, but over the years, George found some unique and probably collectible lures. George's idea to put all the plugs in a pile at the end and take turns choosing one really added a nice wrinkle to the activity. Although not everyone (insert Bill Kittrell) agreed to the terms, having a plug raffle really extended the excitement and definitely added entertainment value."

According to former supervisor, Bill Kittrell "George Palmer put the 'P' in plugging. He had special equipment to search for plugs, knew all the coves in which plugs would accumulate, and had the best search image for plugs of anybody I've ever known. One day, some of us had found a few plugs and, of course, George had found the most. He suggested that we put them all in a pile and divide them equally among each one of us. I told him that was too much like Communism, I'd rather just keep the ones that I found. He joked about that the rest of the time he was in Region 3. George taught us about the fine art of plugging. We taught him about free market capitalism."

I also spoke with former region 3 coworker, John Copeland. He had this to say. "I think I was only George's enabler. He just kept me around to take him to the best coves. I rarely spotted a plug. George always said that what you need is a good rake or hoe to make them pop up. Sometimes we used the boat wake technique. He always kept us entertained during gill netting events with trinkets he found in those coves, added to bags of fish, sometimes in their mouths. He specialized in toy Army men, but small balls would show up as well. I had to give George the shortest gill net pull runs so he would have time to plug a few coves before we headed in to pick the nets."

The spoils of Georges 20 year plugging career can be found stashed in boxes in his office and hanging on his wall decorating repurposed nets that Tyler has found in the field. (See photos right)

I ended by asking George "who will you hand down this great tradition to and are they ready?" "Tyler came to me as a young 'Padawan', he has now graduated to a full-fledged Jedi-Pluggger. He will carry on this great tradition."

I'll end with a quote from Tom; "Give a man a plug and he will be happy for a day. Teach a man to plug and he will be happy for a lifetime!"

~Dan Goetz~



George Palmer with a few of his plugs

Over the Hill but Not Forgotten

This year VA AFS loses a combined 81 years of experience. Mr. David Whitehurst and Dr. Brian Murphy are hanging it up after 44 and 37 Years of service respectively. Fisheries conservation in Virginia, or the nation for that matter, would not be what it is today without the contributions of these two. Let us take a moment to read over their well decorated careers.



David Whitehurst is hanging up his waders after 44 years of dedicated DGIF service. With his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Fisheries & Wildlife from NC State in hand, David began his career with DGIF as a district fisheries biologist in 1975, working out of the Clarksville district office. In addition to fish management responsibilities over several waters in Southside VA, he was instrumental in restoring and enhancing striped bass populations in Kerr Reservoir and Smith Mountain Lake. He was promoted to Regional Fisheries Manager in 1979, and assistant chief of the Fish Division over field operations in 1989. David continued up the DGIF ladder serving as Division chief, Deputy Director of Operations and Legislation, and Director of Planning, Policy, and Public Relations. During his extensive tenure in Richmond, David served DGIF in several leadership capacities which included Director of the Wildlife Diversity Division, Director of the Bureau of Wildlife Resources, and at the time of his retirement, the Federal Liaison and Capital Planning Director.

David has been actively involved in the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Blue Ribbon Panel and its Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife. He was the founding Chair of the Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture, and founding Chair of the Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative. David was the Partners-in-Flight representative to the North American Bird Conservation Initiative and served on its Executive Committee, and a member of the Southeastern Conservation Adaptation Strategy. He also served as Vice Chair of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding Committee as well as its Legislative and Federal Budget Committee, and represented the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on the International Landscape Conservation Cooperative Committee. David served as co-Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Program's Habitat Goal Implementation Team and on the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Regional Review Team for the Northeast Wildlife Action Plans. He was also a huge advocate for expanding wildlife viewing programs across the country. David served as President of Watchable Wildlife, Inc. and directed efforts in building the first statewide wildlife viewing trail. He has also served as President of the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society (AFS), the President of the Fisheries Administrators Section of AFS, and President of the Fisheries Management Section of AFS.

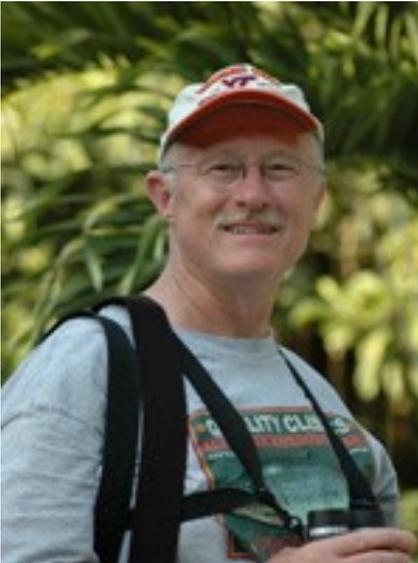
David is highly respected nationally for his tireless work advocating for the protection and enhancement of wildlife resources, species diversity, and threatened and endangered species. He was the recipient of numerous recognitions and prestigious awards. Some of these included River Conservationist of the Year Award from the VA Wildlife Federation in 1993, Conservationist of the Year Award from Trout Unlimited in 1993, the Coastal America Partnership Award from President Bush in 2004, the C.W. Watson Award from the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Southeast Section of The Wildlife Society, and the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society in 2012, and the Seth Gordon Award from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2013.

David will be spending most of his time enjoying his grandchildren, continuing his passion for cycling, and perhaps making furniture in his new woodshop.

~Ron Southwick~

Beginning January, 2019, **Brian Murphy** is a free man as he retires from Virginia Tech. Brian has spent a long and illustrious career serving as a fisheries professor and leader in fisheries science. After finishing his PhD at Virginia Tech, Brian landed at Texas Tech where he served as an Assistant Professor. Interestingly, Brian's doctoral research at Virginia Tech is still influencing Walleye management in the New River today. Brian moved to Texas A&M where he worked as a fisheries professor before returning to Blacksburg to lead the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation as department head.

As a professor, Brian has taught 91 classes in 37 years; 22 different courses (taught in 6 different countries). Additionally, Brian has mentored 25 M.S. and 7 Ph.D. students and has served as Principal Investigator for 68 grants totaling nearly \$4 million. His commitment to higher education and preparing future generations of fisheries scientists is known by many. Since returning to Virginia Tech in 1994, Brian has received many awards for this passion, including:



Virginia Chapter AFS Professional Fisheries Biologist Award, 2016

Fish Management Section, AFS, Award of Excellence, 2013

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award, Center for Instructional Development and Research, Virginia Tech, 2009.

Diggs Teaching Scholar Award, Virginia Tech, 2007.

Fulbright Teaching Fellowship (Mexico), U.S. Dept. of State, Council for the International Exchange of Scholars 2004.

Certificate of Teaching Excellence, Virginia Tech. 1998.

Excellence in Fisheries Education Award (International), American Fisheries Society, 1994

Although retiring, Brian will continue to serve the fisheries profession. He is currently First Vice President of the American Fisheries Society and will assume the presidency at the annual meeting in Columbus Ohio in 2020. And Brian will continue to be active in the Southern Division and Virginia Chapter.

When not working on his beautiful farm in Craig County and serving AFS, Brian will likely spend time with his wife Martha, hunting, fishing, and birding. Congratulations Brian on an incredible career!

~Vic DiCenzo~

From all of us at VA AFS thank you both for your dedication and service.

ChesapeakeCatfish.com

is an outreach effort led by Joe Schmitt and Corbin Hilling. The site includes description of research and FAQ s. Here are five recent posts. You can subscribe to receive blog posts.

What are the odds of catching a trophy catfish?

https://www.chesapeakecatfish.com/single-post/2018/10/07/What-Are-the-Odds-of-Catching-a-Trophy-Catfish?utm_campaign=8e1b9530-2784-4885-9748-057ef6da622b&utm_source=so

Virginia Blue Catfish Exhibit Low Natural MortalityRates

https://www.chesapeakecatfish.com/single-post/2018/09/18/Virginia-Blue-Catfish-Exhibit-Low-Natural-Mortality-Rates?utm_campaign=8e1b9530-2784-4885-9748-057ef6da622b&utm_source=so

Are There Fewer Large Blue Catfish in Virginia

https://www.chesapeakecatfish.com/single-post/2018/09/04/Are-there-fewer-large-Blue-Catfish-in-Virginia%E2%80%99s-tidal-rivers?utm_campaign=8e1b9530-2784-4885-9748-057ef6da622b&utm_source=so

What Do Blue Catfish Eat in Virginia's Tidal Rivers?

https://www.chesapeakecatfish.com/single-post/2018/03/03/Food-habits-of-blue-catfish-in-Virginias-tidal-rivers?utm_campaign=8e1b9530-2784-4885-9748-057ef6da622b&utm_source=so

How Big Can North American Catfish Get?

https://www.chesapeakecatfish.com/single-post/2017/07/19/How-big-can-North-American-catfish-get?utm_campaign=8e1b9530-2784-4885-9748-057ef6da622b&utm_source=so



Announcing the Virginia Junior Fisheries Biologist Program

Eric Hallerman and the Awards Committee

The Virginia Junior Fisheries Biologist Program aims to provide practical field experience to students with interest in pursuing a career in fisheries science and aquatic resource management. Students will be paired with a fisheries mentor from their local area to gain hands-on experience and to plan and execute a fisheries-related project. We seek motivated students that are available to participate full-time (32-40 hours per week) for at least 8 weeks during summer break. Application to the program is open to current 11th- and 12th-grade high school, community college, and four-year college students regardless of race, creed, sex, or economic background. Because a goal of the program is to increase diversity within the fisheries professions, groups underrepresented in our profession are especially encouraged to apply. Information for prospective mentors also may be found by following the link on our Chapter's webpage. Applications and supporting materials must be submitted by December 31, 2018.

Overview of procedure. – Members of the Virginia Chapter will establish connections with high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges to identify prospective participants in this program. Additionally, some school districts have mentorship programs. The Awards Committee and other Virginia Chapter members will attempt to partner prospective junior fisheries biologists with a nearby mentor, for example at a university or an agency such as the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Applications materials may be accessed through the Chapter website <https://units.fisheries.org/va/scholarships/> or from Mike Isel mike.isel@dgif.virginia.gov. The successful applicant will be selected by the Awards Committee. *An application will be approved only if the mentor can demonstrate that the student is covered by liability insurance from the institution or agency at issue or through other means.* The student's stipend will be paid by the Chapter in monthly payments (to be determined based on \$1000/mo. for full-time service), with payment of the last installment contingent upon receiving a final report in the form of a scientific manuscript.

Timeline

Ascertain that the Chapter has support for one or more scholars	September 30
Call for applications and nominations	October 31
Call for mentors	October 31
Students and mentors submit applications	December 31
Award committee considers applications	January – February
Announce award recipient(s) at Virginia Chapter annual business meeting	February – March
Student works with mentor through the summer	June - August
Working with mentor, student prepares and submits a report of the	September 30

Applicants must complete all required fields in all sections of the application of the application to be considered complete. Applicants who submit incomplete applications will not be considered for selection. Please contact Mike Isel (mike.isel@dgif.virginia.gov) with any questions about the application process.

\$Money\$**\$Money\$****\$Money\$**

Robert D. Ross Graduate Scholarship In Fisheries and Related Aquatic Sciences

Virginia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

The Virginia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society invites applications for two graduate scholarships in fisheries and related aquatic sciences. The First Place Award will be \$750 and an Honorable mention will be awarded at \$250. The scholarship will be awarded at the Chapter's annual meeting.

Criteria for the scholarship are:

The applicant must be a graduate student in fisheries, biology, or a related aquatic science program at an accredited Virginia university.

The applicant should demonstrate academic excellence at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as promise for future contributions to fisheries and aquatic resource conservation.

Preference will be given to applicants who wish to pursue a career in fisheries or related aquatic fields and who have demonstrated interest in professional activity in addition to required academic activities.

Applications should consist of:

A letter from the applicant (not to exceed 500 words) describing his/her background in fisheries and related sciences, the significance of his/her research to management/conservation of fisheries and aquatic resources, and career aspirations

Copies of transcripts from all institutions of higher learning attended (unofficial acceptable)

Two letters of recommendation, at least one of which should be from the applicant's major advisor

Applications, transcripts and letters of recommendation should be emailed to the Past President of the Virginia Chapter listed at: <https://units.fisheries.org/va/officers/> with the subject line 'Ross Scholarship'.

Application deadline is 30 days prior to the annual meeting date listed at:

<https://units.fisheries.org/va/meetings-events/>

Robert E. Jenkins Undergraduate Scholarship In Fisheries and Related Aquatic Sciences

Virginia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

The Virginia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society invites applications for two undergraduate scholarships in fisheries and related aquatic sciences. The First Place Award will be \$750 and an Honorable mention will be awarded at \$250. The scholarship will be awarded at the Chapter's annual meeting.

Criteria for the scholarship are:

The applicant must have junior or senior class standing at an accredited Virginia college or university.

The applicant should be pursuing a 4-year degree and should demonstrate in his/her letter of application a desire to pursue a career in aquatic resource management or conservation, or in a field consistent with these areas.

The applicant should demonstrate academic excellence.

The scholarship is for one academic year but may be awarded to the same student for up to two years.

Applications should consist of:

A letter from the applicant (not to exceed 500 words) describing his/her background, qualifications and interest in fisheries or related aquatic sciences,

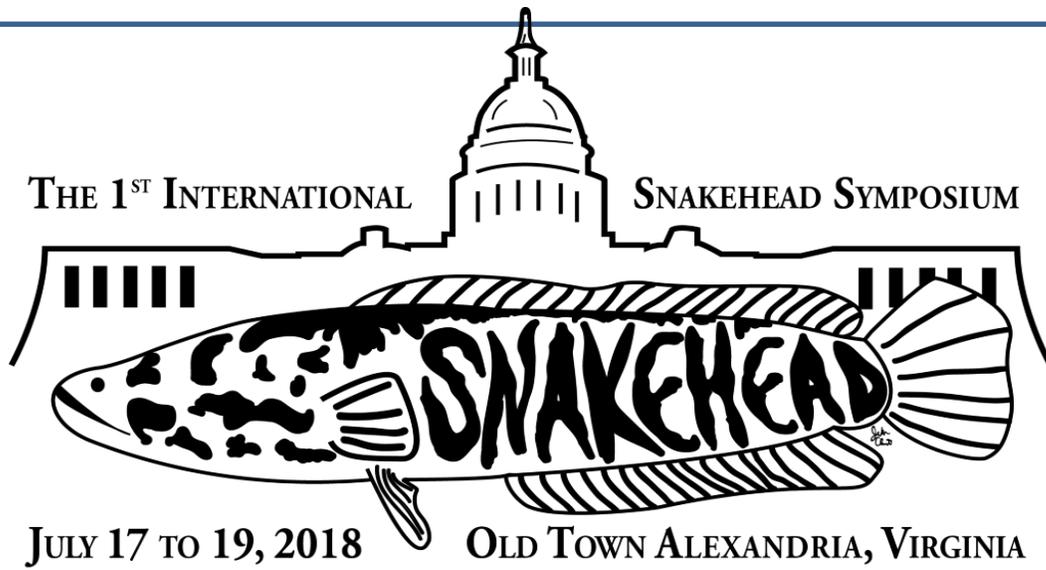
Copies of transcripts from all institutions of higher learning attended (unofficial acceptable), and

One letter of recommendation from a professor in the applicant's major field of study.

Applications, transcripts and letters of recommendation should be emailed to the Past President of the Virginia Chapter listed at: <https://units.fisheries.org/va/officers/> with the subject line 'Jenkins Scholarship'.

Application deadline is 30 days prior to the annual meeting date listed at:

<https://units.fisheries.org/va/meetings-events/>



The Alexandrian Hotel in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia was the site of the First International Snakehead Symposium on July 18 and 19, 2018. The symposium was convened to examine the biology and ecology of snakeheads Channidae; a southeastern Asian fish family that has shown a propensity for worldwide invasion, and could be problematic in North America. Four countries, 24 states and Washington D.C. participated by attending or presenting one of 22 technical papers or 11 posters at the conference. There were 82 registered. The conference appeared to achieve a stated goal by putting together, in one room, individuals most knowledgeable about snakehead biology and ecology and disseminating this information to the audience and the world via live stream (archives may be accessed at <https://units.fisheries.org/va/>). Published proceedings should be available next year. In the meantime, for copies of abstracts; visit the webpage listed above, or contact the author.

The meeting was the brainchild of the Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species (MRBP) and was financially sponsored by MRBP, Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species, and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF). The Virginia Chapter, American Fisheries Society enabled the meeting by contributing member time to manage registration, logistics and program content. Technical sessions were roughly divided into five subjective and somewhat overlapping categories: Distribution, Biology/Ecology, Monitoring/Response, Management/Control, and Perspective. Following technical sessions, there was a panel discussion facilitated by Dr. Don Orth (Virginia Tech). Panel members represented a broad range of institutional snakehead knowledge from state and federal government and private sectors representing various snakehead "constituencies" and answered questions from the audience.

~John Odenkirk~



Save The Date! February 19th-21st, 2019

Virginia Chapter, West Virginia Chapter and Virginia Tech
Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Joint Meeting
The Hyatt Place Blacksburg/University
Blacksburg, VA

Hotel Information:

Hyatt Place Blacksburg/University
650 University City Blvd
Blacksburg, VA 24060
Phone: (540) 552-7500

Rooms available on the nights of the 19th and 20th at a rate of \$108/night, reservations must be made by Jan 19th, 2018
Group Name: American Fisheries Society Meeting

How to submit an abstract: Complete the attached abstract submission form. Attach the abstract submission form to an email with the subject line "AFS Meeting 2019 Abstract". Email the form to VA Chapter Program Committee Chair – Brad Fink at brad.fink@dgif.virginia.gov

Ways to present:

Oral Presentation – 15 minute talk, 5 minute Q+A, PowerPoint required.

Lightning Talk - 7 minute talk, 3 minute Q+A, PowerPoint optional for students and professionals to present new projects or programs, results from ongoing work.

Poster – to be on displayed February 20th starting at 6:00 PM at the German Club, during the start of the social. Submit poster abstract to brad.fink@dgif.virginia.gov by December 28th, 2018. Must be available for Q+A during first hour of social.

Important dates: Submit your abstract for oral presentations by **December 21, 2018** and poster presentations by **December 28, 2018**. Authors will be notified of abstract/poster receipt and acceptance by January 18, 2019 or before. Oral presentations submitted after the deadline may be presented as a poster. A block of rooms is being held at the Hyatt Place Blacksburg / University (540-552-7500) under the name American Fisheries Society Meeting, all reservations must be made by **January 19, 2019** so make sure you book a room!!!

**Awards and scholarships will be awarded at the meeting, please visit the Virginia AFS website for eligibility and applications

Visit the Virginia AFS Website (<https://units.fisheries.org/va/>) for updates and meeting registration when available.

The *Field Guide to Freshwater Fishes of Virginia* is designed to fit the needs of a diverse audience, including fishers, aquarists, educators, students, divers, snorkelers, naturalists and scientists within the freshwater portions of Virginia. Although Jenkins and Burkhead (1994) provided a thorough description of the Virginia’s freshwater fishes in *Freshwater Fishes of Virginia*, this heavy book is targeted toward a scientific audience. This field guide can be stored in a tackle box and taken along on water-based expeditions of the Commonwealth. Further, this field guide provides an updated text on the ichthyofauna of Virginia, as taxonomy, distributions, and species present have changed since publication of *Freshwater Fishes of Virginia*.

This field guide mentions all species and hybrid freshwater fishes, including extirpated forms, e.g. Chesapeake Logperch *Percina bimaculata*, Trout-perch *Percopsis omiscomaycus*, and Harelip Sucker *Moxostoma lacerum*. New and undescribed species, recognized by Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries in their Wildlife Action Plan, are also included so you will know where to find the Carolina Fantail Darter *Etheostoma brevispinum*. We follow Jenkins and Burkhead (1994) in delineating freshwater from brackish and marine fishes. Therefore, diadromous fishes are included in this book, as well as some estuarine fishes (e.g. Mummichog *Fundulus heteroclitus*). A dichotomous key to fish families is provided for the beginner who can then quickly decide on correct family. Families are presented in phylogenetic order from *Fishes of the World*, Fourth Edition, with ancestral families presented before more derived fishes. Each species entry includes common, scientific, and colloquial names, size, abundance, habitat, status, description of the species, reproduction, food, and notes. Range maps represent the best available information on where species may be found today.

Fish species will be illustrated with color illustrations by Val Kells, Joseph Tomelleri and Justin Sipiorski. Sponsors who have supported the development and purchase of art work include Dominion Energy, The Wildlife Foundation of Virginia (in partnership with the VDGIF e Store), Claude Moore Charitable Foundation, North American Native Fishes Association, Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources, Virginia Tech Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited, Rivanna Conservation Alliance, and Virginia Tech Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. If you care to make a donation, send your check payable to Virginia Chapter American Fisheries Society, c/o Karen Horodysky P.O. Box 90778, Henrico, VA 23228-0778.

Reference

Jenkins, R.E., and N. M. Burkhead. 1994. *Freshwater Fishes of Virginia*. American Fisheries Society, Bethesda, Maryland. 6.6 pounds. *Sample page:*

LAMPREYS

Family Petromyzontidae

The eel-like lampreys belong to the most primitive vertebrate group in Virginia. Unlike more recognizable bony fish species, lampreys lack jaws, paired fins, scales, bony skeleton, and external gill (opercular) flaps. Instead, lampreys have an oral disk mouth with horny teeth, a scaleless body, a cartilaginous skeleton, and seven pairs of external gill openings. The teeth patterns of adults are a main method for species identification, (see below). All lamprey species spend several years as a non-parasitic larva known as an ammocoete. There are five species found in Virginia and only two of them are parasitic as adults: the Ohio Lamprey and the Sea Lamprey. The “brook” lampreys are small as adults and spent much of their lives in soft sediments feeding on algae, bacteria and detritus.



Ammocoete larva



Ohio Lamprey



Sea Lamprey



American Brook Lamprey



Least Brook Lamprey

Ohio Lamprey

Ichthyomyzon bdellium

Adult length: 10–14 in.
Abundance: Uncommon.
Habitat: Small and large montane rivers.
Status: Native.



Description: Rounded cross-section; elongate laterally; terminal mouth; long, curved, and sharp teeth; oral disc wider than head; single dorsal fin. Yellow-gold to olive-gray above to pale below. **Reproduction:** Spawns in the spring; builds nests over sand or rock. **Food:** Parasitic on fishes as adults. **Notes:** Hosts include carps, suckers, Black Bass, and catfishes; found in most tributaries of the Tennessee River drainage.

Mountain Brook Lamprey

Ichthyomyzon greeleyi

Adult length: 5–7 in.
Abundance: Uncommon.
Habitat: Small montane creeks and rivers with clean substrate.
Status: Native.



Description: Rounded cross-section; elongate laterally; terminal mouth; short to long straight teeth; oral disc narrower than head; single dorsal fin. Black to dark olive with some mottling on sides and white below. **Reproduction:** Breeds in the spring; nest is a depression over sand or rock. **Food:** Bacteria, protozoans, detritus, and decayed phytoplankton; non-parasitic as larva and adult. **Notes:** Found in most tributaries of the Tennessee River drainage.

Sea Lamprey

Petromyzon marinus

Adult length: 15–25 in.
Abundance: Uncommon.
Habitat: Coastal or Piedmont rivers and estuaries of the Atlantic Slope.
Status: Native.



Description: Rounded cross-section; elongate laterally; terminal mouth; oral disc with sharp, curved, well-developed teeth; oral disc wider than head; two dorsal fins. Dark tan to brown with some mottling. White on belly. **Reproduction:** Migrates during spring into rivers and builds a nest in gravel-sandy bottoms above riffles. **Food:** Filter feeds on bacteria, algae and detritus when young; parasitic on fishes as adults. **Notes:** Sea Lamprey live approximately 8 years with a larval stage between 4–7 years; adults die soon after spawning.



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Recent Member Publications

- Moore, M.J., and D.J. Orth. 2018. Stories worth sharing. *Fisheries* 43(10)
- Moore, M.J., D.J. Orth, and E.M. Hallerman. 2018. Multi-metric conservation assessment for the imperiled Clinch Dace. *Southeastern Fishes Council Proceedings*. 59
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